



Newsletter No. 8, Nov.—Dec. 2006

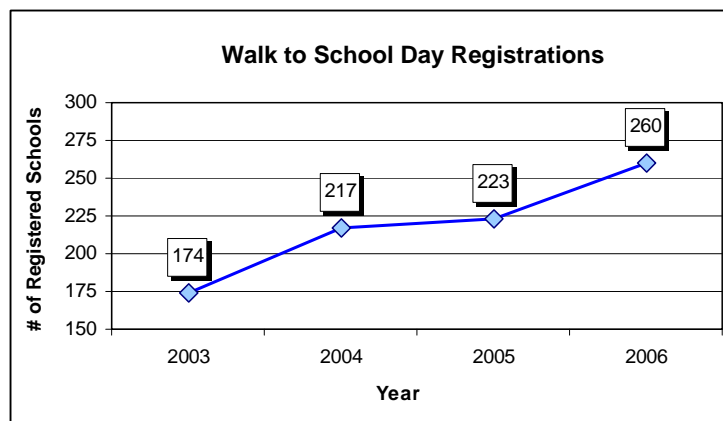
Hello Safe Routes to School coordinators and friends! Here's what's new with Michigan's Safe Routes to School program:

WALK TO SCHOOL DAY WRAP-UP

Walk to School Day 2006 was a big success! A total of 260 schools in 49 counties participated in a Walk to School Day event in Michigan this fall, our largest total ever.

Schools participated in a number of ways, including:

- *Organizing remote drops and pick-ups.* Students that normally arrived by car or bus were dropped a short distance from school at a central location and walked to school together, or the students walked together to a designated pick-up location after school. Some of the locations schools used as drop-off/pick-up sites included football stadiums, local businesses, churches, city landmarks, even a city hall!
- *Holding assemblies* to discuss the importance of daily physical activity and pedestrian safety. Guests included parents, staff, elected officials, high school and college athletes, and marching bands.
- Holding *Walk to School Day-at School* activities that included walking inside the gymnasium or on the playground as a way of involving those students who arrived by bus or car.
- Having students meet at designated pick-up locations throughout neighborhoods as part of a *Walking School Bus* program.
- Many schools used incentives to encourage walking and biking, including raffles and prizes, healthy snacks and drinks, and acknowledging participants in newsletters and during school announcements.



If your school held a Walk to School Day event but did not fill out a post-walk evaluation form, please take a moment to do so and let us know how your day went. The evaluation form is available on www.saferoutesmichigan.org or by calling 1-800-434-8642.

It's also not too early to sign-up for Walk to School Day 2007, traditionally held the first Wednesday in October. Walk to School Day can be held anytime in October, however, so choose whichever date works best for your school. You can register your school online by visiting the Walk to School Day section of www.saferoutesmichigan.org. **Remember, schools that have registered for the Safe Routes to School program are automatically registered for Walk to School Day.**

Finally, a big thank you to all of the staff, student, parent and community volunteers and participants who make Walk to School Day possible!

APPLICATION UPDATE

Michigan's official Safe Routes to School funding application is under final review and will be available on the SR2S website beginning in January 2007. Completion of an action plan via the SR2S Handbook planning process is a prerequisite for eligibility to apply for funding through the federal Safe Routes to School program. **Applications for Safe Routes to School funding will not be accepted unless this process has been completed at the school for which funding is sought.**

Detailed information about the Handbook planning process—and the Handbook itself—can be found at Michigan's SR2S website, www.saferoutesmichigan.org.



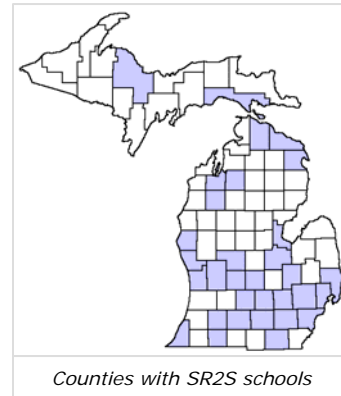
REGISTERED SCHOOL UPDATES

This fall we saw a big increase in the number of schools that have registered for the Safe Routes program. Fifty-eight schools have registered for the program since September 2006, bringing the total number of registered schools to 100 (representing over 42,000 students)!

Here is a breakdown of the schools that have registered to date:

- 82 elementary schools (generally grades K-6)
- 4 intermediate schools (generally grades 4-5)
- 8 middle schools (generally grades 6-8)
- 5 elementary/middle schools (generally grades K-8)
- 1 special education center

Based on location classifications set by the National Center for Educational Statistics, 37% of these schools are in urban settings, 33% are in rural or small town settings, and 30% are in suburban ("urban fringe") settings.



TRAINING UPDATES

The Safe Routes to School training staff recently held their eighth and final training session for 2006 at YouthVille Detroit. The response to our latest round of trainings has been great: over 270 individuals attended a Safe Routes to School training in 2006. We will announce our 2007 training schedule in January; please check the SR2S website for the latest training information.

WELCOME ABOARD

The Michigan Fitness Foundation hired two additional staff members to assist with Michigan's ever expanding Safe Routes to School program.

Sarah KH Richards is a SR2S Program Coordinator with a background in middle and high school youth development, community and social systems and program evaluation. She has a Master of Social Work from the University of Michigan with a certification in school social work. She also holds a BA from Michigan State University in Social Policy.

Andrea Cawthray is a SR2S Program Coordinator and is a graduate of Grand Valley State University with a bachelor's degree in Health Communications and a Masters degree in Communications. She previously worked at the Barry-Eaton District Health Department as a health educator in the primary care clinic working with patients on issues such as health literacy.

THE SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP



The Safe Routes to School National Partnership is a fast-growing network of non-profit organizations, government agencies, and professional groups that are working to set goals, share best practices, secure funding, and provide detailed policy input to agencies implementing the Safe Routes to School national movement. Membership in the partnership is free and open to any organization, school, business, or government agency. Log onto the Bikes Belong website (www.bikesbelong.org) to join.

Risa Wilkerson, Vice President of Active Communities at the Michigan Fitness Foundation, serves as chair of the Safe Routes to School National Partnership Steering Committee, and Lee Kokinakis serves on the Training and Diversity subcommittees.

OTHER UPDATES

New online survey coming soon — A new survey to help track school's progress in their Safe Routes to School program will be online in early 2007. Completing the survey will greatly improve our ability to determine the types of technical assistance that are needed from our office. Stay tuned for more details!

Thanks, and remember to call us if you have any questions, comments or suggestions!

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